

NOTES of the HONOURABLE, the COMMONS of ENGLAND,  
Assembled in the late PARLIAMENT at Westminster, in FAVOUR  
OF  
**Protestant Dissenters.**

November 6. 1680.

Resolved, (*Nemine contradicente*) That it is the Opinion of this House, That the Acts of Parliament, made in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth, and King James, against Popish Recusants, ought not to be extended to Protestant Dissenters.

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to prepare a Bill, for Repeal of all or any part of the Act of Parliament made in the 35th year of the Reign of Q. Elizabeth.

Wednesday 24. ditto.

Resolved, That an humble Address be made to his Majesty this House, by such Members thereof, as are of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, to desire his Majesty to give Order, That all his Protestant Dissenters who are prosecuted upon any Penal Laws, made against Popish Recusants in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth and King James, be admitted to a Composition in the Exchequer without paying any Fees.

Resolved, That leave be given to bring in a Bill, declaring, That the Acts of Parliament, made in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, and King James, against Popish Recusants, shall not be extended against Protestant Dissenters.

Friday 26. ditto.

Secretary Jenkins acquaints the House, That his Majesty had been attended by such Members of this House as are his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, with an Address concerning the Protestant Dissenters, and That his Majesty's Answer is, That they shall be discharged, and without farther as may be done according to Law, and that they be recommended to the Judges.

An Ingrossed Bill the same day for the Repeal of an Act made in the 35th year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth read the third time.

Resolved, That the Bill do pass, and that the Title be, *An Act for the Repeal of a Statute made in the 35th year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth; and that Sir Eliab Harvey do carry the Bill to the Lords for their concurrence.*

Wednesday 15th ditto.

Message from the Lords by Sir John Hoskins and Sir Adam Dareley.

Mr. Speaker, The Lords have Commanded us, to acquaint this House, That they have Agreed to the Bill, sent in this House, Intituled, *An Act for the Repeal of a Statute made in the 35th year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth; with some amendments, to which they desire the Concurrence of this House.*

Resolved, *Nemine contradicente*, That a Bill be brought in for the Association of all his Majesty's Protestant Subjects, for the defence of his Majesty's Person, the defence of the Protestant Religion, and the preservation of his Majesty's Protestant Subjects, against all Invasions and Impositions whatsoever, and for preventing the Duke of York or any Papist from succeeding to the Crown.

Thursday, Decemb. 16th.

A Bill for exempting his Majesty's Protestant Subjects dissenting from the Church of England, from the Penalty of certain Laws, was read the first time.

Resolved, That the said Bill be Read a Second time on Monday morning next, at Ten of the Clock in a full House.

Friday, Decemb. 24.

A Bill for exempting his Majesty's Protestant Subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the Penalty of certain Laws, was read a second time.

Resolved, That the said Bill be Committed upon the debate of the House.

Monday, Jan. 10.

Resolved, That it is the Opinion of this House, That the Prosecution of Protestant Dissenters, upon the Penal Laws, is at this time grievous to the Subject, a weakening of the Protestant

Interest, an Incouragement to Popery, and dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom.

Oxford, Thursday, 24 March, 1680.

THE House taking Notice, that a Bill which passed both Houses the last Parliament, Entituled, *An Act for the Repeal of a Statute made in the 35th year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, was not presented to his Majesty (as the rest of the Bills were) for his Royal Assent.

Resolved, That this House will to morrow Morning at Ten of the clock take into consideration, by what means the said Bill miscarried.

Friday, 25 of March.

The House then according to their Order took into Consideration the matter relating to the Bill which passed both Houses the last Parliament, Entituled, *An Act for the Repeal of a Statute made in the 35th year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*; but was not tendred to his Majesty for his Royal Assent.

The King hath graciously declared his Resolve for frequent Parliaments, knowing with that wise King Solomon, That in the multitude of Counsels there is safety; *Plus vident oculi, quam oculus*. Many Eyes see more than one.

A Parliament is not a concourse of insignificant Atoms, that have no Influence, or Effects, but they are rather a *Congregation or Assembly of Gods*: It may be, this made Mr. Coleman call them [The Omnipotent Parliament:] However, our own Chronicles, calls them a Compound, consisting of so many *Principes Populi, the Princes of the People*; and who ever have been so fool-hardy, as daringly to run a counter or contrary motion to such Counsels, have upon the long Run, Run or Rode Neck-break at last: This is recorded as the experience of all foregoing Ages: The Parliaments Motto is, *Nemo me impunè læssit*: None ever escaped scot-free, that durst oppose and provoke that great Council; both the many and the mighty have in former times like the fluid Waves of the Sea dash'd themselves in pieces upon the Justice of Parliamentary Rocks: And how can these of our present times expect any better success, who act diametrically opposite to the sagest Sentiments of the two Houses of Parliament, wherein the Lords and Commons did concur so happily in Repealing the Act of the 35th of Queen Elizabeth, (which was only intended against Popish Recusants) well considering, that The prosecution of those Penal Laws against Protestant Dissenters, at this juncture of time, can be no better than a gratifying and promoting the Popish Plot. The Parliament-House hath this Honourable Inscription over it:

*Hac Domus edit, amat, punit, conservat, Honorat Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, jura, probos.*

This House hates Sin, loves Peace, and Vice corrects, Maintains just Laws, and Honest men protects.

Now these preceding Votes, upon mature and deliberate consideration being Resolved upon, by the Honourable the Commons of England assembled in the two last Parliaments (*Nemine contradicente*,) who for Loyalty, Prudence, Wisdom, Integrity, and Estates, were never before parallel'd; may it not concern every Subject, especially Magistrates, Justices of the Peace, and other his Majesty's inferior Officers, to take a view of, and be well acquainted therewith, so as they may not be imposed upon by any Insinuation, Promise or Pretence whatsoever, to do that which may tend to Weaken the Protestant Interest and Incourage the Popish Faction; considering, That whosoever shall Act contrary thereto, do wilfully and plainly Act against the expresse Sence of the Commons of England, their own and the Nations Representatives, and consequently cannot but expect to be accountable for the same.

It being one Essential part of our English Government, that there is always a Parliament in posse, though not in esse.